

Application No.: 09/777,867  
Examiner: Thanh X. Luu  
Art Unit: 2878

In the Claims

Claims 10, 11, 14, 16 and 18 are shown as being amended in the "List of Current Claims."

## LIST OF CURRENT CLAIMS

### Claims 1-9 (Canceled)

10. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for determining the state of use fitness of a bank note by sensing the bank note transported along a transport path by a transport device, comprising:

a plurality of identical sensor units and a plurality of identical illumination units, the plurality of sensor units and illumination positioned along opposite sides of the transport path, ~~the sensor and illumination units and positioned~~ arranged so as to focus at a preselected segment of a bank note;

wherein the illumination units are positioned and configured to simultaneously illuminate directly opposed sides of the preselected segment of a bank note;

wherein the plurality of sensors are configured to detect diffusely reflected light.

11. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 10, wherein two of said illumination units are positioned on opposite sides of the transport path relative to one another and have different wavelengths or wave ranges, said two illumination units configured to ~~simultaneously~~ operate at the same respective wavelength or wave range to illuminate the preselected segment of a bank note.

12. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the sensors are positioned in a linear arrangement of a plurality of individual sensor or sensor arrays positioned perpendicular to the transport path.

13. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 12, further comprising a linear arrangement of gradient lenses disposed between the sensors and the transport path to thereby produce a one-to-one image of a bank note determined by the sensors.

14. (Currently Amended) A method for determining the state of use fitness of a bank note by sensing a bank note transported along a transport path by a transport device, comprising the steps of:

simultaneously illuminating directly opposed sides of a preselected segment of the bank note with light at a wavelength or wave range of an identical brightness or intensity; and

evaluating light diffusely reflected from the preselected segment of the bank note to determine the state of use fitness thereof.

15. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 14, wherein the intensity of the wavelength or wave range of light illuminated the preselected segment of the bank note is alternately changed.

16. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 15, wherein areas of the bank note are evaluated at different resolutions for determining the state of use fitness thereof.

17. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 16, wherein predetermined areas of a bank note of a selected currency or denomination are evaluated at different resolutions.

18. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 14, wherein one-dimensional evaluation along a transport direction of the bank note is performed for determining the ~~fitness~~ state of use of each the bank note.